The Non-Manifestative Consciousness

A Deconstruction of Reality based on Nibbana Sermon 07

We enter the landscape of the Kevaddha Sutta, where a monk's quest for the end of the material world leads to a radical redefinition of consciousness. Guided by the comparative insights of Bhikkhu Analayo and the expositions of Katukurunde Nyanananda, this deck explores the "unestablished mind"—where the solid world finds no footing.

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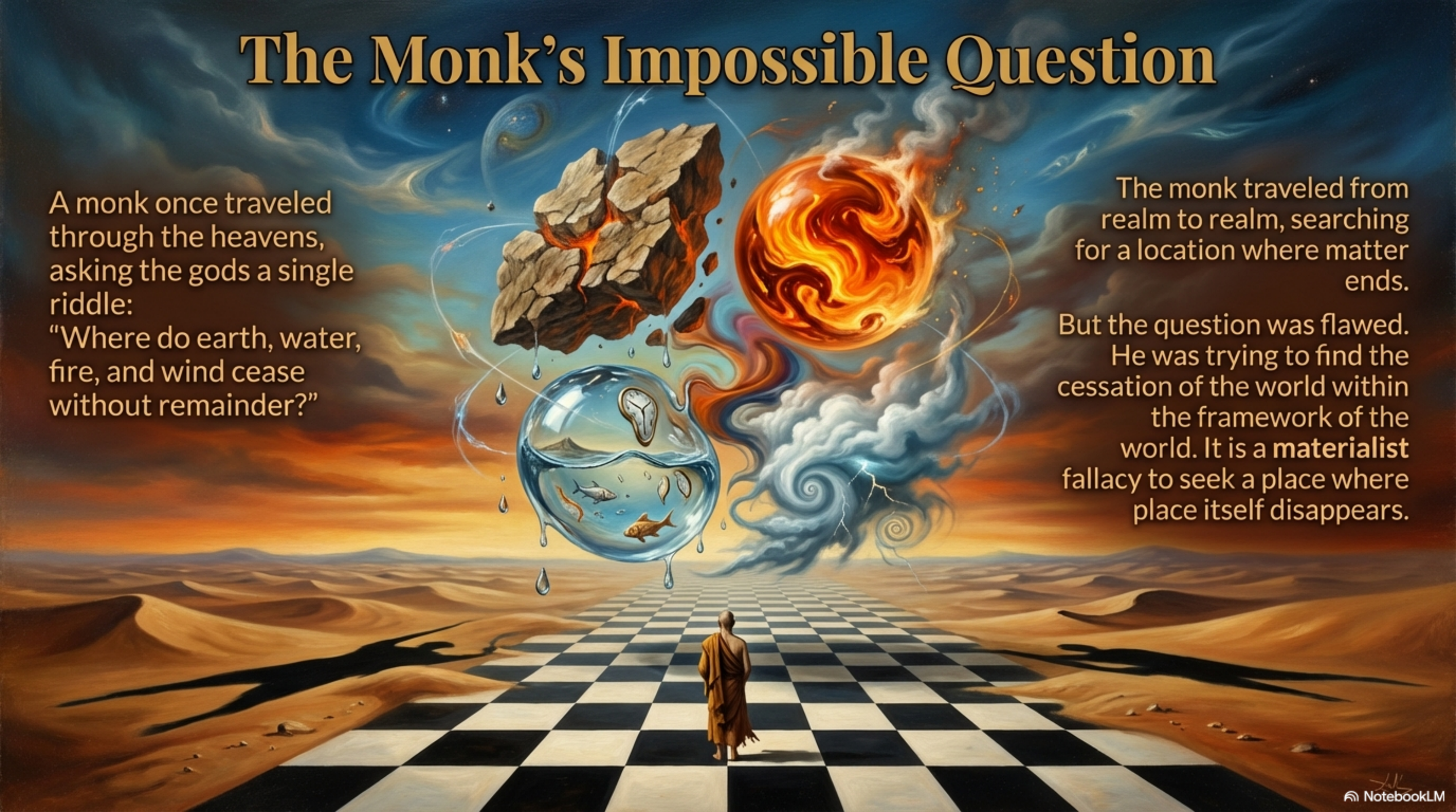
The Monk’s Impossible Question



A monk once traveled through the heavens, asking the gods a single riddle:
“Where do earth, water, fire, and wind cease without remainder?”

The monk traveled from realm to realm, searching for a location where matter ends.

But the question was flawed. He was trying to find the cessation of the world within the framework of the world. It is a **materialist** fallacy to seek a place where place itself disappears.

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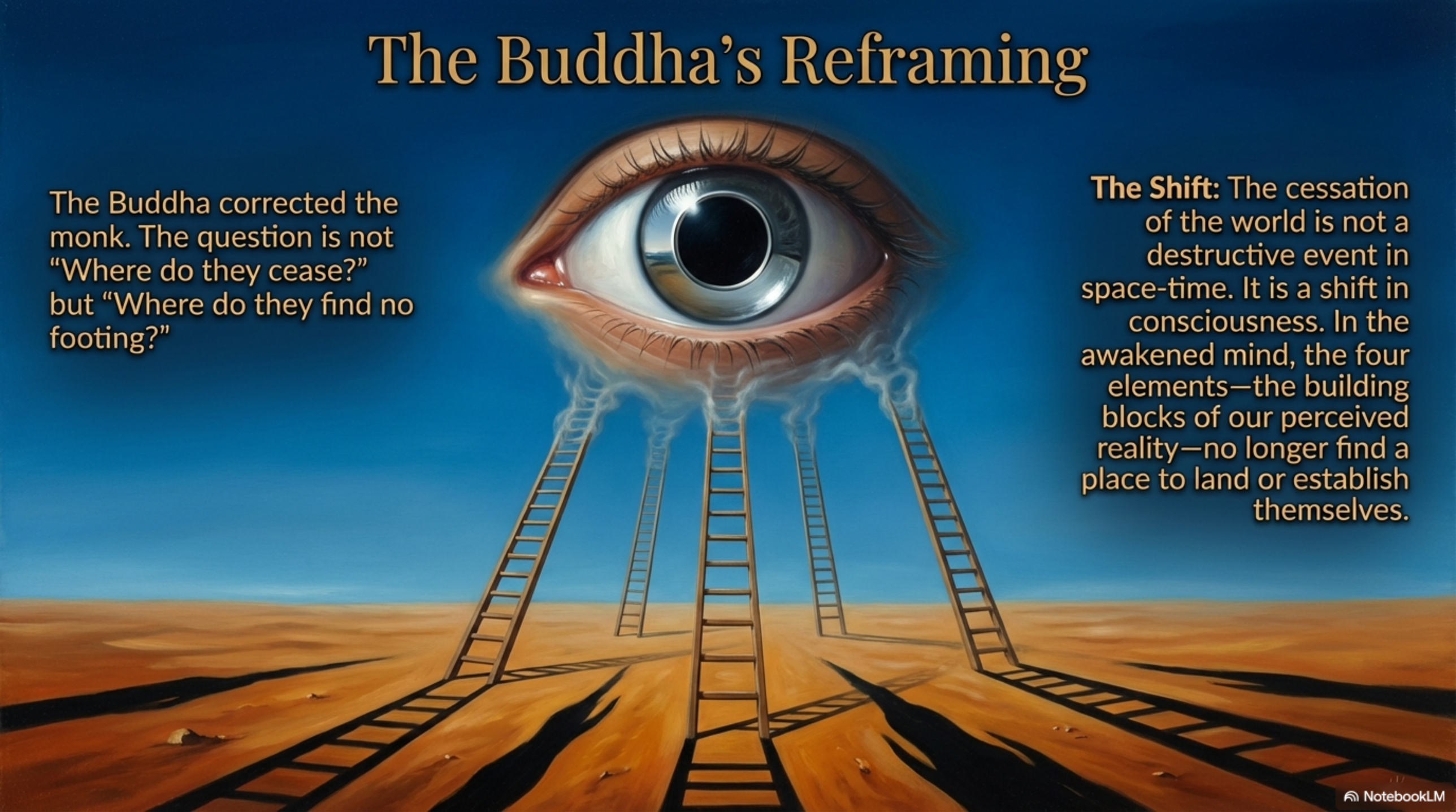
The Buddha's Reframing

The Buddha corrected the monk. The question is not "Where do they cease?" but "Where do they find no footing?"



The Shift: The cessation of the world is not a destructive event in space-time. It is a shift in consciousness. In the awakened mind, the four elements—the building blocks of our perceived reality—no longer find a place to land or establish themselves.

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Painting on Empty Space

The text defines Anidassana Viññāṇa: Consciousness that is ‘non-manifestative’ or ‘non-illustrative.’

The Metaphor: The Buddha asks: Can a painter draw pictures on empty space? No, because space is immaterial and offers no resistance.
Similarly, the released consciousness does not construct a ‘world’ of subject and object. It is like the sky—you cannot plant a seed in it; you cannot paint a form upon it.

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Seeing with Two Eyes

To understand this profound state, we must move beyond a single tradition. Relying solely on Pali texts is like looking with one eye. Comparing them with Chinese and Sanskrit parallels ('looking with two eyes') corrects transmission errors and reveals a broader truth. This comparative approach uncovers that key descriptions of Nibbana may have shifted over centuries of oral transmission.

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Luminosity or Relinquishment?

The Pali verse describes this consciousness as ‘Pabha’ (Luminous). However, comparative studies suggest the original term was likely ‘Paha’ (Given up/Rejected).

The Implication:

The ‘Luminosity’ reading may be a later addition or scribal error. The parallels (Chinese/Tibetan) support the reading of cessation and relinquishment. The goal is not a mind glowing with light, but a mind where the illusion of the world has been entirely abandoned.

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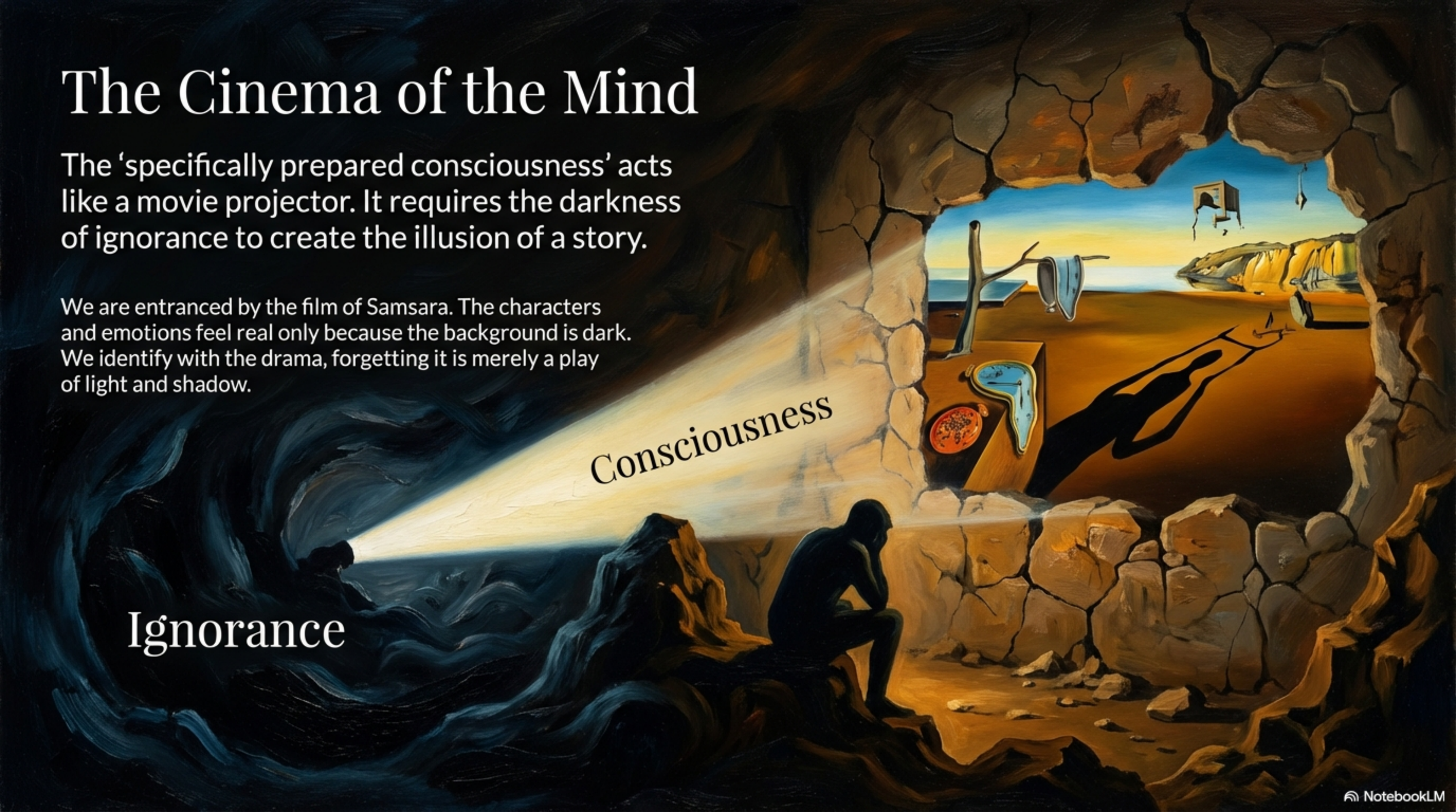
The Cinema of the Mind

The ‘specifically prepared consciousness’ acts like a movie projector. It requires the darkness of ignorance to create the illusion of a story.

We are entranced by the film of Samsara. The characters and emotions feel real only because the background is dark. We identify with the drama, forgetting it is merely a play of light and shadow.



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When the Lights Go Up

Wisdom (Paññā) is the total illumination that floods the theater.

The Result: The film (Samsara) doesn't necessarily stop mechanically, but it loses its 'manifestative' power. The colors fade, the drama loses its grip. In the all-encompassing luster of wisdom, the limited beam of constructed consciousness is no longer effective. The illusion is seen as an illusion.

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The Reflection of Resistance

"You think it looks because the image is there; actually, it sees it only because it looks."

Like a dog barking at its reflection, we create our own duality. Attachment and resistance act as the "glue" that assembles fabrications. The monsters we fight are sustained by our very attention to them.

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Where the Elements Find No Footing

In the unestablished consciousness of the Arahant, matter has no purchase. It cannot “land.”

It is not that the physical world is destroyed. It is that the mind no longer offers a “bottom” for these concepts to rest upon. Without the “glue” of craving, the four elements hover weightless, unable to manifest as a solid reality with “I” and “Mine” attached to them.

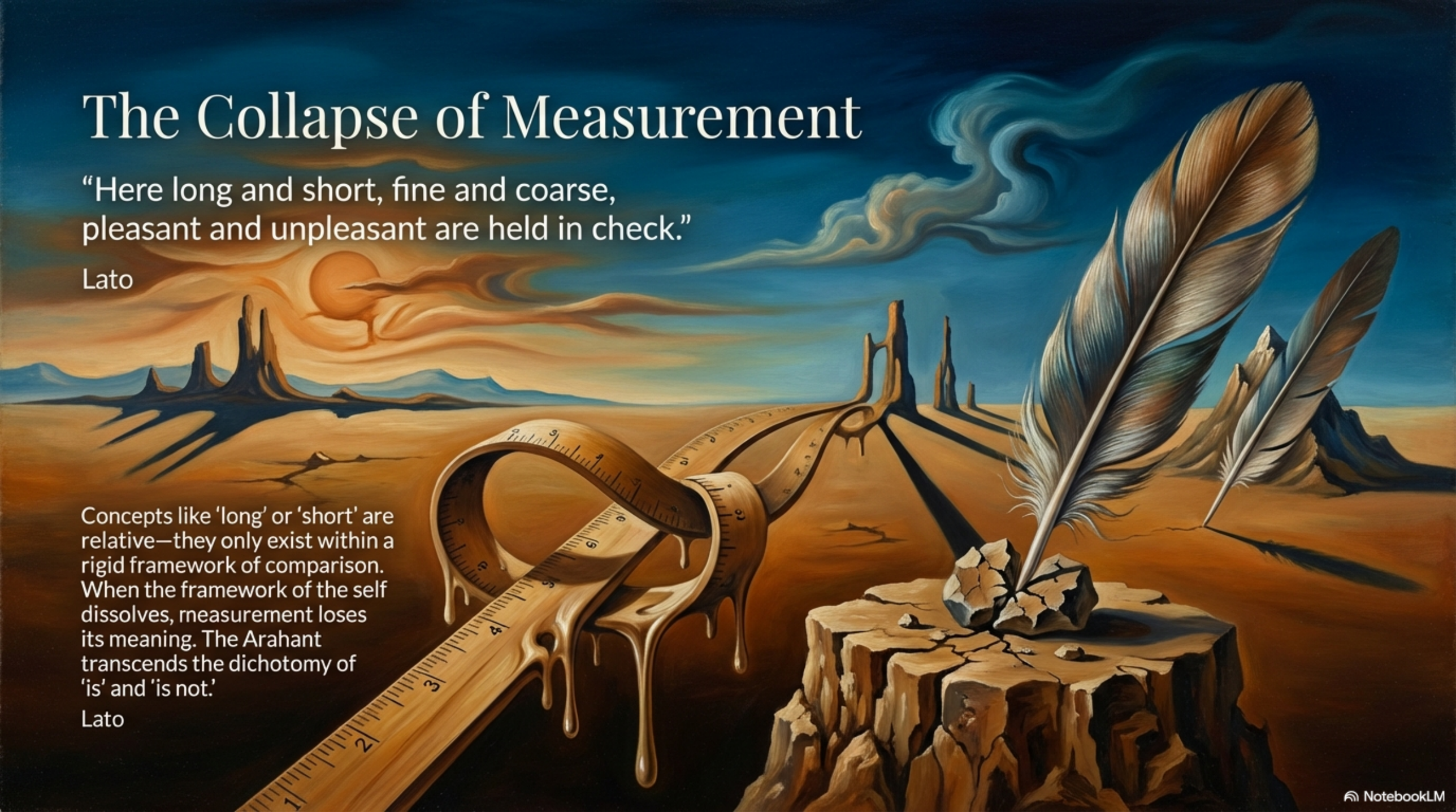
The Collapse of Measurement

"Here long and short, fine and coarse,
pleasant and unpleasant are held in check."

Lato

Concepts like 'long' or 'short' are relative—they only exist within a rigid framework of comparison. When the framework of the self dissolves, rneasurement loses its meaning. The Arahant transcends the dichotomy of 'is' and 'is not.'

Lato



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The Trackless Path

The **Arahant** is Ananta-gocara (of infinite range) and trackless. Craving acts as a net. But because the Arahant has no accumulation of ‘food’ (attachment) and no defined ‘self,’ they leave no trace. Like a bird in the sky, their trajectory cannot be mapped, predicted, or captured by the net of Mara.

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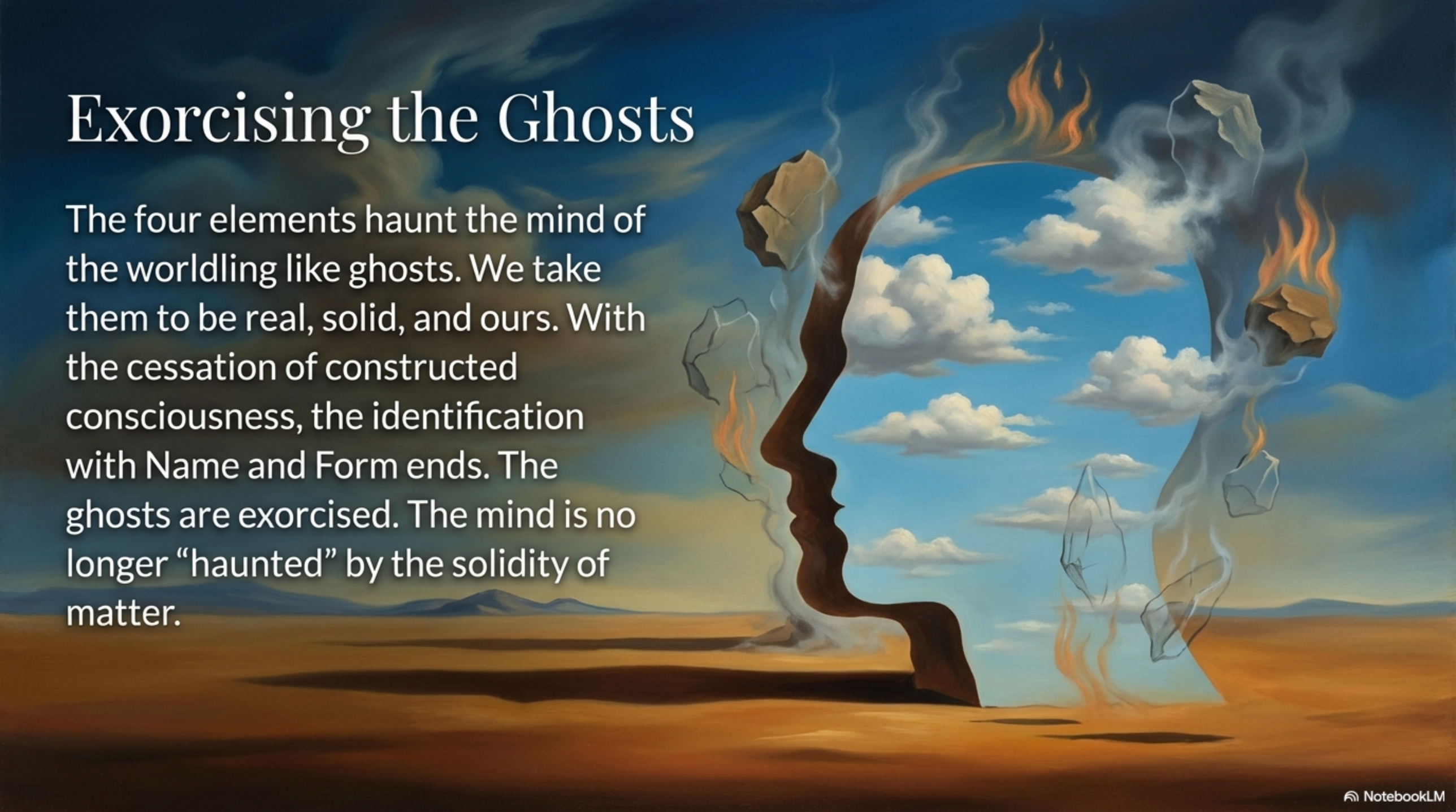
Exorcising the Ghosts

The four elements haunt the mind of the worldling like ghosts. We take them to be real, solid, and ours. With the cessation of constructed consciousness, the identification with Name and Form ends. The ghosts are exorcised. The mind is no longer “haunted” by the solidity of matter.



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The Stilling of Preparations

Lato

Nibbana is the ‘stilling of all preparations’ (sabba-saṅkhāra-samatha). It is the relinquishment of assets. The film has ended, the lights are up, and the assets of the ‘self’ have been liquidated. liquidated.

“Experience as a whole, under clinging, is dukkha. Freedom is the cessation of that clinging.”

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Sources

Primary Source:
Nibbana Sermon 07 by
Katukurunde Nyanananda

Comparative Analysis: Notes
and parallel studies by
Bhikkhu Analayo

Visual Inspiration: The
surrealism of Salvador Dalí

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